

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter provides the premises to the key concepts and issues relevant to the understanding of teachers' beliefs and their practices, in relation to the teaching of vocabulary in reading comprehension lessons. To start with, this chapter introduces the importance of reading and reading for comprehension in the ESL classes. It proceeds to discuss vocabulary; the teaching and the importance of vocabulary in ESL classes, while also reviewing what researchers have to say about various issues related to this study, such as the teachers' beliefs system and the role of the teacher in a language classroom.

2.1 The Importance of Reading

Reading by its very nature is a developmental process, spanning the life of an individual. Each day, many things are read, from menial to the complex, from road signs to newspaper articles. Some things are read quickly with a cursory glance while others are read more carefully. As one gains the skills of reading, enjoyment for reading increases and reading gets easier and faster. The following diagram shows the circle of a competent reader.

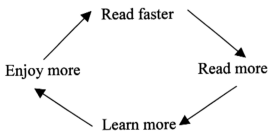


Figure 2.1: The virtuous circle of the good reader

Source: Nuttall (1981) p. 168.

The reading process is also a movement from dependence to independence, a movement from developing reading as a task to using it as a tool (Otto, McNeil and Myres, 1974). At a

young age word recognition is given a major focus and content receives less emphasis. The process of meaning making is difficult as such limited reading ability makes reading a relatively ineffective tool. With instruction through subjects such as English, reading for meaning becomes important. With the focus shifting to reading for meaning or comprehension, vocabulary development and reference skills become a tool (Otto et. al., 1974, p. 21), as learners read on in order to get more information and make meaning. The figure below indicates that reading as a task diminishes as learners begin to focus on meaning using reading as tool as they develop as readers.

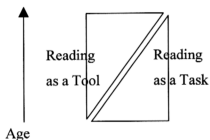


Figure 2.2: Reading as both a task and a tool

Source: Otto, et. al. (1974), p. 21.

Reading as both a tool and a task is illustrated in the diagram above Otto, et. al. (1974) conclude that impeded reading skills make reading a chore or a task while any attempt in making reading a tool will definitely involve increasing reading skills among readers. Vocabulary development is important in facilitating the reading for meaning process, which takes place when reading is used as a tool.

Basically, reading skills are taught for students to understand better (receptive use) and to express themselves better (productive use). As cited in Nation (1990), reading skills may be learned for receptive use (i.e. listening or reading) or productive use (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing). Clearly, receptive knowledge is easier to grasp as the learner is merely

required to be able to recognize words when it is heard or seen and distinguish words with similar forms. The learner is also required to understand expected grammatical pattern and rules. Productive knowledge however, requires a learner to have receptive knowledge as well as the ability to pronounce and spell words. In addition to that, learners must also be able to think of suitable substitutes for a word (if there are any).

However, in the Compendium: A Handbook For ELT Teacher. Vol: 1 (1989), reading is described as a receptive skill. This means that when we read we receive (i.e. read and understand) what the writer has written. If indeed reading is a receptive skill, involving comprehension this does not mean we are passive when reading. We need to actively draw from previous knowledge and respond to what we are reading in order to understand the meaning of what has been written. To respond here means to interpret the meaning that is obtained through representations in the form of words, sentences and paragraphs.

2.2 Reading Comprehension

As we venture forth into the arena of reading, a distinction between reading and reading comprehension tasks needs to be made. Smith (1978), suggests that the former is associated to “word identification” while the later is associated with “meaning identification” (p. 8). According to Smith (1978), the reading comprehension task requires the reader to bring to the text implicit questions about meaning rather than questions about letters or words. The term meaning identification also helps to emphasize that comprehension is an active process. Meaning does not reside in the surface structure. The meaning that readers comprehend from the text is always relative to what they already know and to what they want to know. Smith (1978), regards comprehension as “the reduction of the reader’s uncertainty” (p. 158).

In Malaysia, the shift to communicative language teaching in the 1970's has made the comprehension-based approach emphasize the importance of vocabulary in language learning and an "adequate vocabulary is essential for successful second language use" (Chitravelu, Sithamparam, Teh, 1995, p. 250). Chitravelu et. al. (1995) go on to say, and I quote:

"Without vocabulary, structures and functions cannot be used for comprehension and communication. This view that vocabulary is an important aspect of second language learning is reflected in the Malaysian syllabi for English at both the primary and secondary levels (p. 250)".

Vocabulary, therefore, is an important aspect of teaching ESL so that learner develops the skills of comprehension and communication.

2.3 Vocabulary

Vocabulary is an integral part of learning with all reading materials and vocabulary confidence is a vital part of reading competence and comprehension. Therefore, much depends on the learner. The learner (and teacher) usually cites vocabulary as the main drawback to encouraging reading. It is undisputed that the ability to understand meaning is referred to concrete and conceptual entities and this capacity is provided by the grammar component of language learning. Nevertheless, "knowledge of a language demands mastery of its vocabulary as much as of its grammar" (Wilkins, 1975, p. 19) therefore placing an important role on vocabulary development is necessary.

As mentioned earlier, vocabulary, according to dictionary definitions, is either the total number of words in a language, or the total number of words a person knows. Native speakers of a language can understand many more words than they can actively use. Some may have a passive vocabulary (i.e. words they understand) of up to 1,000,000 words, but an active

vocabulary (i.e. words they use) of between 10,000 and 20,000 words. In foreign language learning, an active vocabulary of about 3000 to 5000 words, and a passive vocabulary of about 5000 to 10,000 words is regarded as the intermediate to upper intermediate level of proficiency (The Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics, 1985).

In discussing vocabulary, a distinction needs to be made between the terms “active vocabulary” (receptive) and “passive vocabulary” (productive). “Active vocabulary” are words which students understand and can pronounce correctly and use constructively in speaking and writing. It constantly changes as more words are learnt and others are forgotten. “Passive vocabulary” are words which students recognize and understand when they occur in a context, but which they cannot produce correctly themselves. It includes all the words which a person recognizes and understands when listening to or reading the language and may not necessarily be part of a person’s own spoken or written language.

The definition taken from the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics (1985) defines active language knowledge (or productive language knowledge) as “the ability of a person to actively produce their own speech and writing” (p. 3). This is compared to their ability to understand the speech and writing of other people, their passive language knowledge. Past research has shown that words learnt through active use have a better chance of being remembered than words, which have merely been heard or read. In short, the repetition and regular exercises/assignments are an important factor influencing vocabulary development (Chitravelu et. al., 1995).

An approach to vocabulary learning, as cited in Nation (1990), makes a clear distinction between direct and indirect vocabulary learning. In direct vocabulary learning the learners do exercises and activities that focus their attention on vocabulary such as word building exercises,

guessing word meanings from context, learning word lists and vocabulary games. In indirect vocabulary learning the learner's attention is focused on some other feature, such as the message conveyed by a speaker or writer. This creates interest and a need to understand unknown words in the message.

Basically, there are four stages involved in direct and indirect vocabulary learning. Firstly, materials are prepared with vocabulary learning as consideration. Secondly, words are dealt with, as they happen to occur in a reading passage. Thirdly, vocabulary is taught in connection with other language activities such as a reading. The final stage involves time spent either in class or out of school on the study of vocabulary without an immediate connection with some other language activity. Therefore, opportunities for direct or indirect vocabulary learning should occupy much more time in a language learning course. This study aims to investigate what actually goes on in a language learning classroom in relation to what English language teachers believe about vocabulary development in ESL.

2.4 The Teaching and Learning of Vocabulary

To understand the area of vocabulary teaching we can draw on two sources of information: the literature on vocabulary learning strategies and the literature on vocabulary instruction.

2.4.1 Vocabulary Learning Strategies

The literature on vocabulary learning strategies suggests that learners need to develop four main strategies for dealing with words in the text. As cited in Cheng (1993), Kupper and Impink (1988) has identified the four main strategies as metacognitive strategies, cognitive

strategies, social and affective strategies and compensation strategies. The following discussion is drawn from Kupper and Impink, 1988 (in Cheng, 1993).

2.4.1.1 Metacognitive Strategies

This involves thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring the learning task and evaluating how well one has learned. The use of metacognitive strategies involves active learning by the student beginning with planning learning which involves seeking practice opportunities. Further, self monitoring involves checking, verifying or correcting one's comprehension or performance in language tasks while self evaluation involves checking outcomes of one's own language performance against an external measure of completeness and accuracy and checking one's language repertoire; strategies used and ability to perform the task at hand.

2.4.1.2 Cognitive Strategies.

These involve interaction with the material to be learned and manipulating the material mentally or physically or applying a specific technique to task learning. For example, resourcing occurs when students use available reference sources of information about the target language, including the dictionary and textbook and prior work. These strategies also include note taking or writing down key words and concepts in abbreviated, verbal graphic or numerical form to assist performance of the language task. They also involve substitution strategies such as selecting alternative approaches or revised plans or different words and phrases to accomplish a language task. Elaboration occurs when the learners relates new information to prior knowledge such as relating different parts of new information to each other, making meaningful personal

associations to information presented. Other strategies include inferring which is done on available information to guess the meaning or usage of unfamiliar language items associated with a language task, to predict outcomes, or to fill in missing information. It also includes the use of mnemonics or mental or actual pictures or visuals to represent information as an aid to memory.

2.4.1.3 Social and Affective Strategies.

This involves interacting with other persons to assist learning or using affective controls to assist a learning task. This involves questioning for clarification and asking for explanation, verification, correction, re-phrasing or examples about the materials or task and posing questions to one's self. There is cooperation, or working together with peers to solve a problem, pool information, check a learning task, model a language activity, or get feedback on oral/written performance. Lastly, active participation occurs where the students participate actively and take initiatives in language learning. These strategies are relevant in the social context of the classroom.

2.4.1.4 Compensation Strategies.

When a learner faces problems with the learning task, he or she may use compensation strategies. The learner may use other means to overcome difficulties or limitations in a learning task. For example, this could involve guessing intelligently or accurately using linguistic or other clues or overcoming limitations in speaking or writing by getting help or using circumlocutions or synonyms. Depending on the student's level of proficiency, these strategies may be adopted individually or a mixture of strategies may be used during a reading comprehension lesson

focusing on vocabulary learning. Hence, this study would also like to investigate further if ESL teachers lead their students to any of the above mentioned strategies.

2.4.2 Approaches and Techniques Used in Vocabulary Instruction

Various strategies have been suggested for the teaching of vocabulary in ESL classes.

However, for the purpose of this study, taxonomy of methods for teaching meaning vocabulary was adopted from the study concluded by Watts (1995). The taxonomy was designed to reflect both instructional methods touted in the literature as well as instructional methods observed in actual classrooms. This taxonomy lists five broad categories; definitional; contextual; organizational (based on semantic framework); mnemonic and structural. Each of these broad categories was subdivided into more specific instructional methods.

2.4.2.1 Definitional Techniques

The term definitional indicates that a definition was provided by a dictionary, a glossary, a thesaurus, a word bank or word log, the teacher or another student. Definitional instruction is defined as a description or statement of a word's meaning. This category may include two different teaching instruction such as the following.

- (a) **Translation technique** and the use of **dictionary** to confirm guesswork. The use of translation in a bilingual classroom may prove effective in conveying meaning. However, translation may not always convey the exact meaning of a word as such the method is only used when students cannot guess from context at all. A dictionary on the other hand may provide a more appropriate meaning, spelling even pronunciation. Dictionary use may also increase the student's understanding of general, technical,

literary terms and the formal and informal use of the word. The dictionary is a valuable support as a back up to contextual guesswork.

2.4.2.2 Contextual Techniques

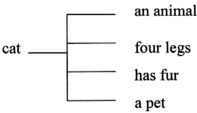
Contextual techniques indicates that the target word was presented in a full sentence, a passage, a fill-in-the-blank sentence, a discussion, or with a picture. This category may include various teaching instruction such as the following.

- (a) Chitravelu (et. al.) (1995), for example suggests most common techniques for teaching vocabulary using **visual techniques** which includes the use of blackboard drawing, wall charts, photographs, flashcards, maps, mime, signs as well as real objects, gestures and even facial expressions. Drawings of simple objects on the board, mime a useful action for words like 'jumping' or 'drinking' or even having an assortment of magazines and illustrated advertisements of interiors of homes can be of great help to the students.
- (b) Watts (1995), defines **contextual instruction** as presenting a word within a larger framework for interpretation such as a sentence, a discussion, or with pictures. This is undoubtedly the most important vocabulary learning strategy. If the word occurs in a text or passage, the meaning can often be deduced when the other words in the sentence are already known. By using contextual clues the reader can often figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word without looking it up in a dictionary.

2.4.2.3 Organizational Techniques

Organizational techniques are based on a Semantic Framework, which includes semantic mapping, semantic feature analysis, categorizing, analogies, examples and non-examples, synonyms or antonyms and homophones. Among popular approaches to this technique are the following.

(a) Linking new words to those already learned helps make vocabulary instruction more interesting and meaningful. As cited in Subbiah (1998), one approach is through the use of the **schema theory** that is the readers’ pre-existing knowledge, which has an important effect on their ability to read a text. If a reader’s past experiences is acknowledged this would provide new methods of teaching vocabulary that should result in greater learning and longer retention than mere conventional methods. For example the word ‘cat’ as read by the student may kaleidoscope into the existing knowledge already in mind. For example in Subbiah (1998 p. 24):



(b) Besides the use of schema theory, the teachers should elicit student’s **prior knowledge** and then use it to form other hypotheses or predict outcomes in a text and organize new information. According to Stieglitz (1983), as cited in Subbiah (1998), the success of a student in becoming proficient in any language will depend, in part, on the extent and richness of his/her past experiences and previously acquired concepts.

(c) Instruction that is organizational/based on a **semantic mapping** is defined as showing relationships between or among words. There has been increasing interest in the use of semantic mapping as a way of increasing vocabulary. Semantic mapping involves the teacher and learners working together to build up diagrammatic maps showing the relationship between vocabulary suggested by the teacher, those suggested by the learners and ones found in a reading text. As semantic mapping often deals with association relationships will be positive (Nation, 1990).

2.4.2.4 Use of Mnemonics

Mnemonics refers to paired association and the keyword method or pegword method.

(a) **Mnemonics** instruction is defined as presenting a word with an emphasis on ways to remember it and its meaning. This is an effective way for learners to create an unusual association between the word form and its meaning. This means that the clue key to the sound of a foreign word contains the key to the meaning of a target language. Craik and Lockhart (1972), in Nation (1990), say that words, which are enriched by associations or images, will stay longer in the memory.

2.4.2.5 Structural Techniques

Structural techniques refer to a focus on roots and affixes, compound words, contractions, and etymology/derivation as explained below.

(a) **Verbal techniques** such as the use of synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, contrasts, definitions, contextual clues, or word groups may be used.. Synonyms, antonyms and homonyms are words formed from the Greek root 'onym' meaning 'name'. 'Syn' meaning 'like'; 'ant' meaning 'contrary' and 'homo' meaning 'same'.

- (b) Structural instruction is defined as presenting a word's meaning in terms of smaller units of meaning found within the word such as **roots and affixes**.

2.4.2.6 Other Techniques

Various other techniques may be used in vocabulary instruction. For example students may play an active role when learning vocabulary.

- (a) Gairns and Redman (1986), have added to these four types of vocabulary instruction with a student centered approach where students can also **ask others** in class like their peers or the teacher what they think a particular word means. This maybe done during the feedback session at the end of each class.
- (b) **Word games** such as crossword puzzles, scrabble, or treasure hunt may be an alternative to vocabulary instruction, but the teacher has to determine when to use these games when trying to fulfil their teaching objectives.

2.5 The Importance of Vocabulary Teaching in Reading Comprehension

The goal for vocabulary development in reading comprehension is to ensure that students are able to apply their knowledge of words to appropriate situations and are able to increase and enrich their knowledge through independent encounters with words. The best way to reach this goal is to help students add to their repertoires (vocabulary) both specific words and skills that promote independent reading and learning of words, and also to provide opportunities from which words can be learned. (Beck and Keown, 1991, as cited in Brozo, 1995).

Pearson and Johnson (1978), Carr (1985) and Anderson and Freebody (1981), as well as Krashen (1979), as cited in Subbiah (1998), have all placed an important role on vocabulary in

understanding a text and it has been generally agreed that word knowledge is critical to a meaningful understanding of a text. Krashen (1979), in Subbiah (1998), goes on to say that vocabulary means more comprehension of input, which in turn means more acquisition of syntax. "Vocabulary if not mastered can make heavy demands on attention of concentrating in reading" (p. 24)

When teaching vocabulary, the teacher must decide whether the vocabulary items that are to be taught are needed by the students for the purpose of word recognition or comprehension or for productive purposes. An understanding of the distinction between these purposes in vocabulary development will help in selecting the various techniques in teaching and learning.

The linking of these techniques of teaching to the vocabulary learning strategies by students of ESL is primarily taught by the classroom language teacher. In determining and selecting suitable vocabulary learning strategies and to ensure success much depends upon the beliefs the teacher holds.

Therefore, teachers play a significant role in the development of vocabulary in a classroom. Underlying the teacher's practice is the key component of teacher beliefs. Teacher beliefs may be said to shape the vocabulary development that takes place in a classroom setting. To verify this, this study will focus on the investigation of teachers' beliefs and practices when teaching vocabulary in reading comprehension lessons to Form Five ESL students.

2.6 Teachers' Beliefs

As soon as a teacher poses basic questions such as what should be done next, issues on what language is and how language should be taught in a classroom, the answers to these questions, which guide teachers' approaches to classroom teaching relate to the underlying

knowledge, assumptions and beliefs of the teacher. 'Knowledge', 'assumptions' and 'beliefs' do not refer to distinct concepts, but rather point to a spectrum of meaning.

The term 'knowledge' refers to the things we 'know'; 'assumptions' normally refers to acceptance of a 'fact', while beliefs refer to an acceptance of a proposition for which there is no conventional knowledge, one that is not demonstrable, and for which there is accepted disagreement (Woods, 1996). As cited in Woods (1996), "teachers' background knowledge and beliefs have not been investigated in depth in the field of second language teaching" (p. 107). It would therefore be especially, interesting to investigate if there is any congruence between teachers' beliefs and their practices with reference to vocabulary development in the Malaysian ESL context.

In Malaysia, formal ESL teaching takes place in schools, colleges and universities. Very often, this is where the teachers themselves have the experience of learning English as a second language. Informal language learning on the other hand may have taken place through language experiences such as at home or within the community. ESL Learning may also result through the influences of the mass media such as television, radio and newspapers or from other members of the family and friends who are proficient in English. When English is learned in the classroom, the teacher plays a significant role. Teachers may teach using various styles of teaching methods and techniques, depending on what they may choose. This choice is often a result of the individual teachers' beliefs. In attempting to explore vocabulary teaching in ESL, it would be very interesting to investigate the congruence between teachers' beliefs and their practices with reference to vocabulary development.

Pajares (1992), has argued that "the investigation of teachers' beliefs is a necessary and valuable avenue of educational inquiry" (p. 326). Teachers' beliefs are based on evaluation and

judgements surrounded by an emotional aura that dictates rightness and wrongness which ultimately influences teachers' thoughts and decision making. Belief systems have an adaptive function in helping teachers' define and understand the world around (or classroom) and themselves (Pajares, 1992). He says that the beliefs teachers hold influences their perceptions and judgements, and this in turn, affects their behavior in the classroom. As such, understanding the belief structures of teachers is essential to improving their professional preparation and teaching practices (Pajares, 1992, p. 307). According to Pajares (1992), beliefs have traveled under the guise of attitudes, values, judgements, axioms ideology perceptions, concepts, implicit theories, personal theories, internal mental processes and repertoires of understanding.

Drawing from other research conducted by Kagan (1990), Pajares (1992) and Johnson (1992,1994), as cited in Lyla (1996), the term 'teacher beliefs' has been defined as the individual way in which a teacher displays an understanding of the classroom, the students, the nature and relationship of teaching and learning reading, the teacher's role in the classroom, the student's role in the reading process, the general roles of education and the ways in which she or he expresses these views by her or his behavior in the classroom.

Research on teachers' belief system done by Kindsvatter, Willen and Ishler (1988), as cited in Richards (1994), suggest that teachers' beliefs are derived from a number of different sources. These include teachers' own experiences as language learners; experiences of what works best; established practice; personality factors; educationally-based or research-based principles; and principles derived from an approach or method of teaching.

A more recent study done by Lyla (1996), explored the beliefs, decisions and practices of two master teachers in a reading class. From her study she observed that her subjects held personal beliefs about their learners, the role of the teacher and reading in L1 and L2 (first and

second language). Her findings were, one of the master teachers displayed that her instructional decisions and practice were consistent with her espoused beliefs while the other showed inconsistencies between her beliefs and actual practice. Here, it is suggested that the role of teacher beliefs in classroom practice cannot be conclusively stated

Various other studies have also examined the congruence between teachers' beliefs and practices. A study by Kaur and Samuel (1994), examines teacher trainees' theoretical orientations on teaching, learning and language. Three main orientations were investigated; the behavioural, cognitive and communicative. Their findings however revealed that there is a dichotomy in their subjects' overall views of language learning and teaching. They attribute that a sound teacher preparation programme is one which provides a voice for multiple theoretical orientations and still creates opportunities for allowing trainees to take from diverse orientations and appropriate for themselves a personal belief system that is consistent and coherent.

A literature search on ESL teachers' thought processes reveals that there is a limited amount of work done in the Malaysian context in this field. The above were some studies that illustrate the shaping nature of teacher beliefs. In addition a doctoral dissertation by Habibah (1994), examined four Malaysian ESL teachers' beliefs about language learning and teaching in relation to their instructional practices in the classroom. Habibah's study essentially reveals that ESL teachers hold personalized pedagogical beliefs about language teaching and learning. They also display instructional practices that reflect their professed beliefs.

Because of such inconclusive findings, further research is necessary. A review of research done on teachers' beliefs and practices by Zhihui Fang (1996), presents an outline of several possible directions for further teacher education research including the area of teacher beliefs and practices. According to Fang, one possible territory for further research should be

placed upon where little attention has been paid to which are teachers' beliefs about a particular component of subject area. He states:

Whereas many studies have investigated reading teachers' beliefs about what reading is and how it develops, few have examined teachers' beliefs about particular components of reading such as vocabulary development. . . . (Konopak and Williams 1994, as cited in Fang 1996, p. 59).

Konopak and Williams (1994), as cited in Fang (1996), pointed out, while the nature of vocabulary learning changes as subjects become more diversified and specialized, there is a decline in vocabulary instruction as students advance in schools. This study aims to investigate teacher beliefs and practices within the Malaysian context in the teaching and learning of vocabulary especially in a reading comprehension class. It is felt that the teacher plays a crucial role in ESL teaching and learning. Therefore the link between teachers' beliefs and their practices in this study helps determine the selection of suitable vocabulary learning strategies during reading comprehension lessons.

2.7 The Role of the Teacher in the ESL Vocabulary Classroom

Teacher decisions determine the nature of vocabulary teaching and learning in the ESL class. The language teacher plays a significant and crucial role in selecting and determining what words (vocabulary) should be taught and what was not needed by the students do not need. In the language learning situation, the importance of decision-making by the teacher includes the items worth learning for productive use and those, which are only useful for purposes of recognition. This decision-making has several implications. The teacher will need to select what he/she feels will be most relevant for the students' productive vocabulary and this, in turn, will affect the teachers' treatment of those items in the classroom (Gairns & Redman, 1986).

As a guide, the teacher may make this decision based on the frequency counts of the vocabulary item. Making a list of words in a particular text or group of texts and counting how often and where they occur usually helps. Another factor which may determine the vocabulary needed to be taught is the cultural factors in a text such as words referring to a particular climate, landscape, food, clothing or customs.

Teacher perceptions of students' needs are also important. Finally, the student-related factors should be also taken into consideration as some students may be required to read technical materials for specialized purposes. Besides that, the level of competence (i.e. beginner, intermediate, and advance) has a significant impact on the individual's degree of motivation. The teacher has to be aware of the amount of vocabulary needed by the student. However, there is also a need to limit the vocabulary that is introduced to school students, because, if too much is introduced, students will be impeded by the need to absorb too many words and become demotivated. Clearly, this indicates that the teacher has a great responsibility since his or her 'knowledge of the complexities and usefulness of the items is likely to be superior to the students' knowledge' (Gairns & Redman, 1986, p. 65).

The essence of a teacher's role in any learning environment has been emphasized by Vygotsky's theory of language and literacy development. Vygotsky points out that students learn by working with more knowledgeable persons when a particular skill or knowledge is needed to perform a specific apprenticeship. An apprenticeship, which requires considerable practice, may be developed under an expert's guidance. This expert in the language class is the teacher. Such an appropriation occurs in what Vygotsky terms the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD). The ZPD is the level of knowledge between normal students' performance and what a student is capable of attaining with expert assistance (Sigelman & Shaffer, 1970).

Realizing the fact that the teacher plays a crucial role in the learning environment, therefore to investigate further into the development of language teaching and learning this study is appropriately observed through the spectrum of the teacher beliefs and practices.

2.8 Conclusion

According to Nespor (1987), it has become an accepted idea that teachers' ways of thinking and understanding are vital components of their practice. However, the effects teachers' beliefs have on student outcomes have not been studied in sufficient amounts to draw a clear picture of how students react to teacher beliefs. Teachers' knowledge and practice needs to also be studied in greater detail, identifying how they interact with each other especially and how they interact with teachers' beliefs. Therefore, one of the outcomes of this study is to get a sense of how the whole picture fits together with regards to how the teachers' beliefs are interpreted into their classroom practices.